THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited is setting up an oil refinery at Bathinda (Punjab). Crude inputs for the refinery will be transported from Mundra port (Gujarat) through a cross-country pipeline.

(b) and (c) The Company is not aware of any threat from the Government of Rajasthan to block the pipeline to be laid for the proposed refinery.

Visits of leaders of oil producing countries to India

121. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that eminent leaders from oil producing countries will be visiting India in the near future to discuss refining and marketing of fuel oil in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Visits by eminent leaders from oil producing countries is an on-going process and, in addition to the large number of Ministers who visited New Delhi in January, 2005 for the Round Table of Asian Oil Ministers, and the visit by the Ecuador Minister for Petro-Tech 2005, we have visits scheduled from Venezuela and indications of visits from the Netherlands, the USA and Turkey. During these visits, cooperation in all streams of the oil sector, including refining and marketing of fuel oil, if brought up by the other side, are likely to be discussed.

Adulteration of petroleum products

122. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is massive adulteration of petroleum products all over the country;

(b) whether it is a fact the PSU Oil companies are unable to control this adulteration;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the staff of Oil PSUs at some level are colluding with the petrol pump owners;

(d) in what manner Government propose to curb adulteration of petroleum products; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The possibility of adulteration of petrol & diesel by unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out owing to the price differential between Petrol/Diesel and various adulterants available in the market like Kerosene, Solvents, etc., and the easy miscibility of these products with petrol & diesel.

(b) No, Sir. They are doing so to the best of their ability in accordance with established procedures and guidelines.

(c) While illegitimate activities on the part of some staff can not be ruled out, strict surveillance and vigilance is maintained to ensure that there is no illegitimate collusion between staff and petrol pump owners.

(d) and (e) In order to reduce, minimize and eventually eliminate adulteration, the following important steps have been taken:—

* Government have issued Control Orders under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 namely Naphtha Control Order, 2000, Solvent Control Order, 2000 and SKO Control Order, 1993 to prevent the misuse of these products for adulteration of auto fuels. MS/HSD Control Order, 1998 also privides for prevention of use of petroleum products other then MS/HSD as auto fuel. These Orders provide powers of search and seizure to the State Governments and Oil Marketing Companies to check adulteration. State Governments have been advised to take strict action under these Control Orders against persons indulging in adulteration.

* Oil Marketing Companies undertake regular and surprise inspections of Retail Outlets and also take action under Marketing Discipline Guidelines and Dealership Agreements against those indulging in adulteration and malpractices.

* Marketing Discipline Guideline have been made more stringent to invoke the penality of termination of dealership in cases of adulteration being established.

* Oil Marketing Companies have also introduced new tamper proof tank-truck locking systems to prevent *en route* adulteration by transporters.

* Trials for introduction of Marker System.

* Keeping in view the misuse/diversion for adulteration, the import of SKO by private parties has been canalized through Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies.

* IT solutions like monitoring movement of tank truck through Global Positioning System (GPS) and monitoring level of fuel tanks in Retail Outlets through retail automation.

* Measures to check adulteration are kept under continuous review of the Government.

Development of tourist spots in Andhra Pradesh.

123. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what concrete and innovative steps are being taken for the past three years to develop the tourist spots in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have planned to undertake any study to find out the ways and means to increase foreign exchange earnings through foreign tourists in India;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Development and promotion of tourism is a continuous process. However, Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments/ UT Administrations and on the basis of field visits and consultation with them. The following schemes are provided in the 10th Five Year Plan:

(1) Product Infrastructure and Destination Development

(2) Integrated development of Tourism Circuits